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## HINTS FOR THE LATIN TEACHER

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"If, forgetting that education is an art," says Mr. Charles Mills Gayley, "we try to make of it a pleasant meandering, we set up the idol of Play. To the worship of the idol of Play, set up in the academic market-place, we especially attribute the lapses of mental and moral discipline, unfortunately common among our young people of today."

No one, perhaps, is more conscious of the havoc wrought by the ever-increasing worship of this and other idols of education than the Latin teachers of the present time. Many of them aver that it is almost impossible to get the average boy and girl of today enthusiastic over the subject at all. While admitting the difficulty of the task, I still have a firm belief that interest and happiness can be secured even in Latin classes without "turning education into ring-around-a-rosy."

However, I fully recognize the difficulties that must be overcome by all travelers along the *via Latina*, whether they be the guides or the guided, for just as Latin is, *per se*, a most difficult subject to learn, so it is a difficult subject to teach. But it is a subject dear to my heart and no one can convince me that it is not one well worth while.

But since many of our pupils, especially the boys, are, like their parents, utilitarians rather than culturists, they must be convinced that Latin has a market value. Therefore, my first advice to Latin teachers would be: Extol your subject. Preach the value of Latin. By *extol* and *preach*, I do not mean the careless and all too frequent reiteration of hackneyed phrases about the value of Latin but I do mean practical and frequent tests of its value.

If, for instance, when the word *caro* first appears, Johnny has been asked in advance to write upon the board, as a part of that day's lesson, ten or more English words derived from this one Latin

word, not only will such words as *carnival*, *carnivorous*, *carnation*, and *incarnate* have a new meaning for him but he will begin to *feel* the value of Latin as the most dignified and exact means of arriving at the full content of at least 60 per cent of all the words in the English dictionary.

At the close of a recitation recently, when I asked my Caesar class to see who could write in three minutes the most English words derived from the Latin *duco*, one bright girl handed in the following: "conduct, conductor, non-conductor, induction, deduction, induce, deduce, reduce, produce, product, production, conduce, deductible, conducive, aqueduct, inducement, inductive, deductive, induct, duct, ductless, abduct, abductor, abduction." The class thought she had done well to think of twenty-four words but when I told them that there were one hundred or more English words derived from this one Latin root, they seemed to have more respect thereafter for the unpretentious but important little word *duco*. Telling them that *pono* furnishes the key to the meaning of about 250 English words, *plico* to that of 200, *fero* and *duco* 100 each, I ask the members of the class to keep a list of the derivatives from these words as they appear in the course of their reading.

Occasionally I ask pupils to bring to the class all the words derived from Latin which they can find in some one paragraph of their English or history lesson. Only yesterday, one lad presented this list from the last paragraph of chapter five in *Silas Marner*: "resort, luxurious, superfluous, power, dignities, public, customers, assembling, parlour, reserved, select, society, frequently, double, personages, ornamented, consequence, seats, numerous, usual, admitted, opportunity, condescension, content, vary."

One finds in every Latin class boys who have fond hopes of becoming professional men some day, and yet these same boys may be studying their Latin in a most perfunctory manner, getting thereby little of the value it has in store for the willing workers. Whenever occasion offers, upon the occurrence of certain words in the lesson, I aim to give these lads a test of the practical value of Latin. The words *fio*, *pulvis*, and many others offer material. Putting the following medical formulas upon the board I call for rapid sight translations:

*Fiat pulvis et divide in pilulas XII.*

*Fiat unguentum.*

*Fiat haustus.*

*Fiat massa in pilulas viginti dividenda quarum sumat aeger tres in spatio trium horarum.*

Similarly chemistry formulas and botany nomenclature may be used.

One day I invited a well-known high-school graduate who was studying medicine in a neighboring college to give my classes a short talk on the value of Latin to the boy studying medicine. It paid me for my past efforts with this same lad to see the enthusiasm with which he told these undergraduates of the ease and satisfaction with which he could grasp the meaning of medical terms while the *Latinless* boy had to spend hours learning the meaning of *ferrum*, *aqua*, etc. "Boys," he concluded, "just let me tell you this, Latin is the most dignified subject you can take in this high school today and besides it is the very best study to train your mind. If you intend to study medicine and don't want to stay with the big crowd at the foot of the ladder, begin getting at the top right now, by going up the Latin rounds."

One Saturday I telephoned to a few of our prominent physicians asking them as a special favor to write my pupils a letter, telling what they thought of the value of Latin. I asked one of the boys to whom Latin had seemed rather dull and uninteresting, but a necessary evil since he wished to be a doctor, to read these letters before the class. They were all vigorous and emphatic in their testimony for Latin and the lad's progress in the subject dates from that day. He remarked, as he handed me the letters, "Gee whiz, I didn't know these doctors thought Latin was so important." The boy told the truth and we Latin teachers must never expect pupils to put forth their best efforts until we help them to see some practical results from all that effort.

A course in Latin, I grant, may not be as immediately practical as a course in bookkeeping or shorthand with their "position guaranteed" as a bait, since

O cives, cives, quaerenda pecunia primum est  
Virtus post nummos.

On the other hand its practicalness will prove far more satisfying and complete.

The *Western Teacher* says:<sup>1</sup> "Intelligent business men who speak from experience say that the young man who has a good general education and who has been trained to see quickly and reason correctly soon outstrips one who specializes too early by taking a practical course designed to prepare him for business."

It is not to be wondered at that foreigners, upon observing our "short cuts" through institutions of learning, usually too, along flowery paths, remark that in our country everyone gets a mouthful of education, but scarcely anyone a full meal. Yet in no country can a full meal be obtained more cheaply than in our own. Strange, it seems to me, that so many prefer the mouthful. Horace Mann, in his day, noted this preference and more than once remarked: "A teacher who is attempting to teach without inspiring the pupil with a desire to learn is hammering on cold iron."

I have found, in the case of some pupils, that their desire to learn Latin is quickened somewhat by presenting to them the views of noted men regarding the value of that subject. I have collected a large number of quotations, some one of which I give to my classes every week, asking them to take this promise of reward as an incentive for earnest study throughout the week. The first quotation I give is Mr. Huxley's definition of education:

To accustom myself to do the thing I know I ought to do at the time when I know I ought to do it, whether I feel like doing it or not.

Others are the following:

The mastery of Latin makes it easier to learn four or five of the continental languages than it is to learn one without it.—John Stuart Mill.

Classical training is not easy, is not for every mind, but for those who are capable of receiving it, it is still the best instrument for mental development.—Dr. Harry A. Garfield, President of Williams College.

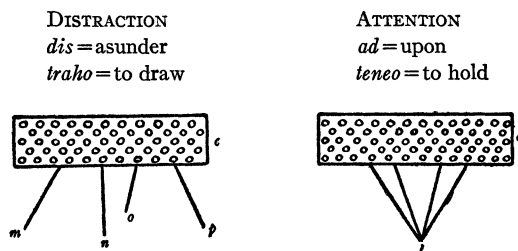
Latin is the most logically constructed of all the languages, and will help more effectually than any other study to strengthen the brain centers that must be used when any reasoning is required.—Dr. Frank Sargent Hoffman.

A man in after-life may forget the declensions and the conjugations, may lose power indeed to read or translate but the effect of the study on his mental development, the knowledge of men and the world that is thereby gained

<sup>1</sup> June, 1902.

directly or indirectly, the uplift of soul, the widened vision—these have entered into and become a part of his being, that shall never leave him more.—Charles R. Williams, Editor of the *Indianapolis News*.

I think I emphasize more than some teachers do the derivation of words. My experience is that it pays. One of the devices to which I resort in order to teach pupils the true meaning of *attention* is the derivation of the word from the Latin. I place the following crude diagram upon the board:



I explain: Let *c* represent the brain cells in your head, all of which should be centered upon the task at hand, we will say the preparation of your Latin lesson, *c* ——— *l*. Let *m* represent some outside occurrence that interferes with your attention, for instance, a person passing the door. Immediately a certain number of your brain cells are drawn (*trahere*) along *c* ——— *m*, away from your lesson to the passer-by. You look up to see who he is; you even get up to see what he wants. No sooner have you gotten those cells centered again upon your Latin lesson, your idle curiosity satisfied, than the telephone rings and again those untutored little cells wander off in the direction of *c* ——— *n*. After the intruder has been disposed of, a third time, *maiore nisu*, like Aeneas at the grave of Polydorus, you attack your Latin lesson. But soon *vox fertur ad auris* and away goes a goodly amount of brain energy along *c* ——— *o*, to see whose voice it is that disturbs your so-called study hour. Undoubtedly, by this time, you despair of getting your lesson at all. Incalculable, in fact, is the amount of brain energy consumed along the line *c* ——— *p*, in vain fretting and inane worry over the possible difficulties to be met with in each lesson.

Your mind is in a state of distraction and always will be until

you have learned to hold those brain cells in control and centered upon the task in hand—which thing results in attention and concentration. Nay, more, it results in education itself if we accept Mr. Huxley's definition of education already mentioned: "To accustom myself to do the thing I know I ought to do, at the time when I know I ought to do it, whether I feel like doing it or not."

After I have thus crudely explained the process of attention I find I can often secure the attention of a class for a long period, by merely placing upon the board this crude diagram, saying nothing.

Eternal vigilance, however, is the price we Latin teachers must pay, if our pupils acquire the study habit, without which Latin is impossible. Therefore, I try to impress upon them the supreme importance of getting a new point the first time it is presented, and getting it "for keeps"—the *diligentia in perdiscendo* of Caesar, if you wish to express it in more dignified terms. Little less than criminal is the amount of time, energy, and patience, expended in teaching the simple verb forms and case usages to say nothing of those wrecked and stranded upon that Scylla and Charybdis, the periphrastics and the gerund and gerundive. Numerous theories have been advanced as to ways and means of decreasing the number of fatalities, but as Mr. Hosea Ballou once said: "Theories are very thin and unsubstantial; experience only is tangible."

My experience is that any child of average ability can learn Latin and can enjoy it also, providing he is taught by some method that will preclude his taking up an advance lesson until he has mastered the one before. This is the method in Germany, and accounts, I think, for the fact that German students are superior, intellectually, to American students of the same age. It was Quintilian's method as set forth in his own words: "Nomina declinare et verba imprimis pueri sciant, neque enim aliter pervenire ad intellectum sequentium possunt."<sup>1</sup> If it was necessary for the Roman boy to master the first elements of the language before attempting to read continuous Latin, how much more necessary it is for our own pupils today.

In teaching second-year Latin, for instance, I first give a thorough verb review and then, in addition to a small amount of text,

<sup>1</sup> Quin. Book I, chap. iv, section XXII.

I take up in order such topics as sequence of tenses, *cum* temporal clauses, the periphrastic conjugations, etc., one at a time, and drill every day on that particular point. After a reasonable time I give a short but searching test. Those who show that they do not yet have an accurate working knowledge of the points covered must continue to work upon them until they can prove to me that they understand what has been gone over. To relieve myself of the burden of correcting so many extra papers, I appoint from my best pupils, assistants, who take entire charge of some particular group of pupils. It may be that the same pupil is doing work under two or three different assistants on as many different points in grammar. This extra daily individual work I call penalty work, the penalty paid for not getting a principle when the first opportunity for getting it was given. Pupils do not resent it. On the other hand, it makes the class seem like a large family in which the assistants act the rôle of brother or sister to the less fortunate or less energetic members. There is a healthy mental atmosphere in these classes and the moral tone is excellent also, for as Laurence Cameron of Hull Military Academy says: "Many moral lessons are bound up in the toilsome months of the learner's first progress toward a mastery of Latin."

Any mechanical device that can be used without serious loss of time, for increasing interest in the subject-matter, should be employed. A number of years ago, a boy in one of our Caesar classes who was also taking manual training made an excellent model of Caesar's bridge in miniature. This has been used ever since in our Caesar classes and has made the crossing of that famous bridge easier and pleasanter for many a pupil.

Occasionally I use an entire recitation period for sight work in Latin composition. Not only does this enable me to direct the pupils' methods of study somewhat, and to see to what extent they are working independently, but it also enables the pupils to measure their capacity against that of their fellows. I assign sentences based upon a previously read text, to be translated from English into Latin. The sentences are handed to me one at a time, corrected and returned, the pupil attacking the second just as soon as the first is handed in, and so on. When a slow, indifferent, or care-



less pupil sees that he has done only one or two sentences while others have done in the same time and under exactly the same conditions three or four times as many, he will see by this vivid object-lesson that it does pay to learn vocabulary, forms, and the basic principles at the time of their first presentation. Too many of our pupils are supremely content if they merely get a passing grade. If they just get over the bars into the next higher class they have no fear of landing as cripples on the other side.

Besides attention, our Latin pupils need to be taught the value of honest independent work. The reading of some such article as that of Chancellor Andrews on "Cribbing" is prolific of good results. I tell my pupils I think it more of a theft to "crib" someone else's Latin prose than to steal his lunch, if for no other reason than that it is harder to get a Latin lesson than to prepare a lunch and therefore the purloining of the former is the greater crime. We may say regarding the needs of our Latin pupils what Mr. Roosevelt says of our politicians: "Honesty first, then courage, then brains."

I have always thought that it took courage on the part of young pupils to set out to learn vocabulary, as that vastly important part of Latin is usually relegated, in most first-year Latin books, to a formidable list of words in a review lesson, which lesson is frequently omitted by teachers in their hurry to get over the term's limits. Textbooks, after the first year, make almost no attempt to lessen the pupil's difficulty in mastering vocabulary and yet every Latin teacher knows that one of the chief causes of discouragement in second-year Latin is the monotonous, time-consuming hunt for words. In the first-year work I have found vocabulary contests prolific of good results. These "spell-downs" may be between the members of one class or between those of two or more different classes. After the first year I believe that notebook lists of the more difficult new words should be systematically kept by pupils and frequently reviewed. While some very definite formal work must always be done if pupils learn vocabulary, still I am inclined to think that many words are *caught* as well as *taught*; therefore I depend upon thorough and oft repeated reviews of previously read texts, together with the work in derivation already

mentioned as one means of teaching vocabulary. The dictum of Ritsche regarding German is also applicable to Latin: "Lesen, viel lesen, mehr lesen." I try to have pupils curtail the use of the lexicon and look up as few words as possible. Quite often I write upon the board all the new words in an advance lesson, together with their meaning, and ask that no other words be looked for.

The total vocabulary used by Cicero in the six orations usually read in our high schools numbers 2,117 words. That of Caesar in the first five books of his *Bellum Gallicum* is 2,106 words, while Virgil uses 3,214 words in the first six books of the *Aeneid*. If, then, a child knows 2,000 words he has at hand  $\frac{9}{10}$  of the total vocabulary of any Latin author with whom he would come in contact. This necessitates that he learn less than three words a day. No Herculean task, surely!

The grading of written work in Latin is a pleasing device which the children enjoy, although it aids but little, to be sure. Some such expressions as the following written upon papers returned to pupils fix quite a few usable words in their memory: *Scribe maiorem cum cura*; *Scribe iterum cras*; *Id magna cum voluptate lego*; *Multa errata*; *Me taedet huius erroris*; *Diligentius stude*; *Haec stultissime scribuntur*; *Tibi domi magis laborandum est*; *Memoriam exerce!*

Again I have several Latin mottoes framed and hung in my classroom. My favorites are: *Possunt quia posse videntur* and *Qui non proficit deficit*. Sometimes I place a weekly motto upon the board. The pupils eagerly vie with one another in trying to get the translation first. The following have served for this purpose: *Carpe diem*; *Acti labores iucundi sunt*; *Labor omnia vincit*; *Culpam poena premit comes*; *Magna est vis consuetudinis*; *Parva parvam decet*. Similarly the state mottoes may be used. *Dirigo* (Maine); *Alis volat propriis* (Oregon); *Crescit eundo* (New Mexico); *Dum spiro, spero* (South Carolina).

Mr. J. J. Schlicher says:<sup>1</sup>

The vocabulary is not simply a dull task invented for the mortification of the flesh unless you choose to have it so. It may be a cage filled with living things, waiting only to fly forth, with songs of joy or terror, each one an interesting individual being, distinct from all its fellows. There is no reason at all

<sup>1</sup> *Classical Journal*, October, 1911.

why teacher and pupil should not have and display their likes and dislikes, and have their friends and aversions even among this company. That is one thing which lies along the road toward a feeling for literary values.

I fancy I can hear someone say: How can we overburdened Latin teachers ever find time in recitations for anything outside of the textbook when we hardly have time to get over the all too numerous things inside the book? The same question often confronts the teachers in my own high school and to meet this long-felt need of some stimulus to create more interest in the classics, we organized a Latin society. This society meets for an hour after school, once every two weeks, all Latin students except Freshmen being eligible. The programs for the year are made out in advance and printed in booklet form. I append a few of the programs for the current year.

#### THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF LATIN

"The mastery of Latin makes it easier to learn four or five of the continental languages than it is to learn one without it."—John Stuart Mill.

SONG BY THE SOCIETY, *Milites Christiani*.

ESSAY: "What I Have Gained from the Study of Latin."

READING: "A Short Story of the English Language," *St. Nicholas*, XXVI, 593.

ESSAY: "Some Common English Words Derived from Latin."

ESSAY: "The Pleasurable Side of Latin."

ESSAY: "The Value of Latin as a Preparation for the Study of Medicine."

READING: "Rome's Gift to Us," Hale, *First-Year Latin*, Preface.

*Satura Romana*.

#### ANCIENT ROME

"I am in Rome! Oft as the morning ray  
Visits these eyes, waking at once I cry:  
'Whence this excess of joy? What has befallen me?'  
And from within a thrilling voice replies  
'Thou art in Rome!'"

SONG BY THE SOCIETY, *Integer Vitae*.

PAPER, "Topography of Rome," Lanciani, chap. iv.

ESSAY: "The Gardens of Ancient Rome," Littell's *Living Age*, ccxxxix, 458.

RECITATION: "Urbs Roma Vale," Littell's *Living Age*, civ, 447.

ESSAY: "St. Peter's and the Coliseum," *Atlan. Monthly*, xl, 409; *Chautauqua*, xxxiv, 57; *Guhl and Koner*, p. 454.

READING: "A Walk in Rome," *Chautauqua*, xxxiv, 56.

*Satura Romana*.

## POMPEII

"I do not care for the skeletons. Give me the white immortality of my marble gods."

SONG BY THE SOCIETY, *Gaudeamus*.

ESSAY: "The City of Pompeii before the Destruction," Lytton, *The Last Days of Pompeii*.

READING: "The Destruction of Pompeii," Lytton, Vol II.

A Letter of Pliny the Younger to Tacitus.

ESSAY: "Recent Excavations and Discoveries in Pompeii," *Stoddard Lectures*, "Naples."

READING: "A Municipal Election in 79 A.D.," Littell's *Living Age*, ccxlii, 188.

READING: "The Interior of a Pompeian House," *Cosmopolitan*, xxiv, 521.

POEM: "Pompeii," *Cosmopolitan*, xxiv, 182.

*Satura Romana*.

By way of explanation I might add that the *Satura Romana* is our "funny paper." It contains jokes, some of the humorous blunders heard in translation, Mother Goose rhymes done into Latin, descriptions in Latin of some teacher or pupil, etc.

In conclusion, all of these random suggestions which I have offered with more or less diffidence, since I am far from satisfied with the results of my own Latin teaching, I would summarize in this one *caveat*: Arouse in the child his latent energy and create interest. Many discouragements are bound to come to us in this process of brain-training. But discouragements come to the pupils also. Therefore let us have intelligent sympathy for these children under our care, remembering that there is little hope for the child who has lost faith in himself.

According to Carlyle, "You can conquer Fate by thought." Let us then in our teaching radiate success thoughts. Let us impress indelibly upon the mind of every child the thought that "Every Man Is a King" and by masterful teaching and skilful planning, aided by cautious but not stinted praise, wherever praise will help to make some child's pathway smoother, let us try to lead every child into the Kingdom of Successful and Happy Service.